Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (original): A method of validating an identity of a user using a pointing device comprising the steps of:

displaying a background image,

positioning at least one object on said background image,

operating said pointing device to provide data relative to said background image,

sampling a plurality of events corresponding to positions of said cursor while performing said step of operating to provide a sampled pointing device (PD) signature including a set of position vectors,

comparing said sampled PD signature to a stored PD signature representing the identity of the user, and

validating said identity of said user in response to said comparing step.

2. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of operating includes moving said PD to manipulate a cursor on said background image.

3. (original): The method of claim 2 wherein said step of operating said pointing device includes moving a mouse.

4. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of sampling a plurality of events includes clicking of said pointing device.

5. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of sampling a plurality of events includes a drag and drop event by said pointing device.

6. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said sampling a plurality of events includes sampling a time component.

7. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of comparing includes applying a set of agents to analyze said sample signature and determining if said sample signature satisfies a threshold matching criteria.

8. (original): The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

   receiving a plurality of signature exemplars; and

   creating a set of agents associated with said exemplars.

9. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of displaying said background image includes displaying a graphic.

10. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of operating said pointing device includes positioning said cursor relative to said objects.

11. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of operating said pointing device includes positioning a draggable icon on said background image.

12. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of sampling a plurality of events includes sampling horizontal and vertical positions of said cursor and a time parameter associated with respective ones of said events.

13. (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of sampling a plurality of events includes sampling a mode of said input device.

14. (original): The method of claim 13 wherein said step of sampling a mode of said input device includes a step of sampling a normal mode, a "drag and drop" mode, or a click mode of said input device.

15. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of processing said position vector to provide signature characteristics includes a step of processing a series of said events using a plurality of agents.

16. (original): The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of:

receiving a verification request from a provider; and

issuing in response to said step of validating, an authorization message to said provider.

17. (original) A software system stored on a computer readable medium for validating a user's identity comprising software configured to perform the steps of:

displaying an object map to a user;

receiving a signal from an input device manipulated by a user;

sampling a plurality of events corresponding to positions of said cursor to provide a sampled signature including a set of position vectors;

processing said position vectors to provide signature characteristics;

comparing said signature characteristics to characteristics of a stored signature representing the user's identity;

validating said user's identity in response to said comparing step.

18. (original): The software system on a computer readable medium of claim 17 wherein said step of operating includes moving said PD to manipulate a cursor on said background image.

19. (original): The software system on a computer readable medium of claim 18 wherein said step of operating said pointing device includes moving a mouse.

Claims 20 – 32 (cancelled)

33. (original): A signature recognition system comprising:

a user computer system including a pointing device and a display screen, said user computer system operational to display a virtual pad on said display screen, respond to a positioning of said pointing device to position a cursor on said virtual pad, and provide a collection of vectors describing an operation of said pointing device with respect to said cursor; and

a verification server in communication with said user computer system for receiving said collection of vectors, processing said vectors, comparing said processed vectors to exemplar signature data and, in response, providing signature recognition data.

Claims 34 – 48 (cancelled)